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Introduction

This guidance accompanies the [REC DMP Template](#). The template should be used when making an application for ethical approval to the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) or a School Research Ethics Committee (SREC) that requires submission of a DMP as part of an application for ethical approval.

The REC DMP Template is for use with REC submissions only. It is not a general research project data management planning tool. The RDM website provides [guidance on general-purpose DMP tools](#).

You should complete the DMP with reference to the guidance below and the [Data Protection for Researchers](#) guide provided by the Information Management and Policy Services (IMPS) office. You can also refer to the [REC DMP Examples](#) document, which provides examples of suitable responses for inclusion in the DMP.

All sections of the DMP must be completed; if a section is not applicable, enter N/A. For submissions to UREC, the DMP will be reviewed by the IMPS office and the Research

Most research data collected from research participants can be safely and ethically

A sample consent form, with consent formulae for sharing of anonymised open data, and for restricted sharing of data under safeguards, can be found on the [IMPS website](#). The UK Data Service provides guidance on seeking [consent for data sharing](#), and includes a model consent form.

5. How will retention and disposal of personal data and confidential information after project completion be managed?

5.1 Retention period

State how long you plan to retain personal data/confidential information after the end of the project.

5.2 Responsible person(s)

Specify under whose authority this information will be maintained and disposed of after the project.

Guidance

Personal data should be retained as long as necessary for the specified purpose. It is acceptable under data protection law to retain personal data, used for research purposes, for long periods, subject to periodic review, if they are held for archiving purposes in the public interest, for scientific or historical research purposes, or for statistical purposes. For example, if follow-up studies are contemplated, then continued retention is justified, providing this purpose has been notified to the individual. Care should be taken to avoid commitments to the Research Ethics Committee or participants to destroy personal data by a given time, e.g. 3 years after the completion of the project. It is better to indicate that data will not be held longer than necessary for the specified purpose(s), and schedule regular reviews of personal data holdings to determine whether they need to be retained or can be safely destroyed.

Each research project is unique, and researchers may need to apply a case-by-case assessment to determine how long records and data should be kept. However, it is recommended that consent forms, as a minimum, are retained for the period of time that the research study data is held in identifiable (including coded) form + 5 years. Consent forms can be retained for longer periods if the nature of the research deems it necessary. Exceptions to the minimum retention period will apply where longer retention periods are required in accordance with any contractual, legal, or statutory obligations or directions that are specific to your study, or any terms and conditions imposed by external research sponsors/funders/third parties, for example the Medical Research Council (see guidance on retention periods in the MRC [Good Research Practice](#) guide, p. 10).

If personal data/confidential information will be retained in the long term after the completion of the research, planning should take into consideration where and under whose authority they will be held, and what provision is made for transfer of ownership

group might maintain a personal data asset register, listing personal data held, owners of the data, storage locations, the retention schedule, and the date of next review. The primary owner might be the PI of the original project, with the schedule administrator having access for administrative purposes, and ownership defaulting to the Head of School in all cases, data of which the Head is responsible for.